

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BAGHDA 01905 231646Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM USINT BAGHDAD
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 1905

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, UN, IZ
SUBJECT: IRAQI UN MISSION ACQUISITION OF FIREARMS

REF: STATE 309837

1. ON DECEMBER 23 I WAS RECEIVED BY WISSAMZAHAWI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLITICAL DEPARTMENT IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND I BRIEFED HIM ON SITUATION REGARDING IRAQI UN MISSION PURCHASE OF FIREARMS. I WENT CAREFULLY OVER TALKING POINTS CONTAINED PARA THREE, STATE 299104. I THEN SAID THAT USG WAS PARTICULARLY DISTURBED BY AMBASSADOR SHEIKHLY'S ASSERTION THAT HE HAD RECEIVED ONLY 70 WEAPONS WHEN WE HAD CONCLUSIVE PROOF THAT HE HAD RECEIVED ONE HUNDRED. I SAID THAT THE USG TOOK A SERIOUS VIEW OF THIS MATTER, AND IT SEEMED APPARENT THAT WE WERE NOT RECEIVING THE FULL STORY FROM THE AMBASSADOR.

2. ZAHAWI, WHO UNTIL RECENTLY WAS THE SECOND RANKING OFFICER IN THE IRAQI UN MISSION, ASKED IF SHAIKHLY WAS STILL MAINTAINING THAT HE HAD RECEIVED ONLY 70 WEAPONS. I CONFIRMED THAT HE WAS. I ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE RETURNED BOXES HAS BEEN MARKED ONE/4, 2/4, AND 3/4, BUT THAT BOX MARKED 4/4 WAS NOT RETURNED. I SAID THAT USG HAD SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE IN HAND TO ARREST AND INDICT THE ARMS DEALER, AND WE WERE QUITE CERTAIN
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ONE HUNDRED WEAPONS HAD BEEN DELIVERED.

3. ZAHAWI SAID HE WOULD REPORT TO HIS SUPERIORS AND WOULD THEN BE IN TOUCH WITH ME. HE ADDED THAT I HAD ENLIGHTENED HIM A GREAT DEAL ON THE AFFAIR.

4. COMMENT: I BELIEVE SHEIKHLY HAS REPORTED LITTLE OF OUR APPROACH TO HIM TO GOI. MY TALK WITH ZAHAWI SHOULD HELP PUT EVENTS IN BETTER PERSPECTIVE FOR GOI OFFICIALS. WHEN WORD OF TAYYAR'S ENFORCED DEPARTURE REACHES BAGHDAD, HOWEVER, THERE MAY STILL BE A FACE SAVING REACTION AGAINST USINT. WILEY

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